AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A print inspection apparatus, comprising:

an image sharpness conversion element for weakening an image sharpness of inspection object data which is acquired in a processing on print image data and that of reference data which represents an image condition as a reference for comparison with said inspection object data by performing an average-masking operation on pixels constituting said inspection object data and pixels constituting said reference data on the basis of a predetermined mask size, respectively; [[and]]

a comparison element for comparing said inspection object data and said reference data with each other after ~~converting~~ weakening their respective image sharpnesses, ~~to perform an inspection for printing~~ thereby generating comparison result data which describes a difference between a tone value of the said object image data and that of said reference image data by pixel; and

a judgment element for judging whether said difference is significant or not in accordance with a predetermined judgment parameter, thereby generating inspection result data which represents a result of judgment.

2. (Currently Amended) A method of performing an inspection for printing, comprising the steps of:

(a) ~~converting~~ weakening an image sharpness of inspection object data which is acquired in a processing on print image data and that of reference data which represents an image condition as a reference for comparison with said inspection object data by performing an average-masking operation on pixels constituting said inspection object data and pixels constituting said reference data on the basis of a predetermined mask size, respectively; [[and]]

(b) comparing said inspection object data and said reference data with each other after ~~converting~~ weakening their respective image sharpnesses, ~~to perform an inspection for printing~~ thereby generating comparison result data which describes a difference between a tone value of the said object image data and that of said reference image data by pixel; and

(c) judging whether said difference is significant or not in accordance with a predetermined judgment parameter, thereby generating inspection result data which represents a result of judgment.

3. (Currently Amended) A printing system which generates print image data and performs at least one of plate making and output on the basis of said print image data, comprising:

(a) a print inspection apparatus for performing an inspection of said print image data, which comprises

(a-1) an image sharpness conversion element for ~~converting~~ weakening an image sharpness of inspection object data which is acquired in a processing on said print image data and that of reference data which represents an image condition as a reference for comparison

with said inspection object data by performing an average-masking operation on pixels constituting said inspection object data and pixels constituting said reference data on the basis of a predetermined mask size, respectively; [[and]]

(a-2) a comparison element for comparing said inspection object data and said reference data with each other after converting their respective image sharpnesses, ~~to perform an inspection for printing~~ thereby generating comparison result data which describes a difference between a tone value of the said object image data and that of said reference image data by pixel, and

(a-3) a judgment element for judging whether said difference is significant or not in accordance with a predetermined judgment parameter, thereby generating inspection result data which represents a result of judgment.

4. (Original) The printing system according to claim 3, further comprising:

(b) an image reader capable of reading at least one of images for a printing plate, a plate-making film and a printed matter,

wherein image data acquired by said image reader becomes at least one of said inspection object data and said reference data.

5. (Currently Amended) A program ~~which is~~ stored in and executed by a computer to cause said computer to function as a print inspection apparatus comprising:

an image sharpness conversion element for ~~converting~~ weakening an image sharpness of inspection object data which is acquired in a processing on print image data and that of reference data which represents an image condition as a reference for comparison with said inspection

object data by performing an average-masking operation on pixels constituting said inspection object data and pixels constituting said reference data on the basis of a predetermined mask size, respectively; [[and]]

a comparison element for comparing said inspection object data and said reference data with each other after ~~converting~~ weakening their respective image sharpnesses, ~~to perform an inspection for printing~~ thereby generating comparison result data which describes a difference between a tone value of the said object image data and that of said reference image data by pixel; and

a judgment element for judging whether said difference is significant or not in accordance with a predetermined judgment parameter, thereby generating inspection result data which represents a result of judgment.